

4 April 1972

The Director

GACarver, Jr.

Attached is a cable I think merits your personal attention, largely because I agree wholeheartedly with the point Tom Polgar is making. This is a thought I was trying to convey in our conversation after this morning's Executive Committee meeting. The networks are full of pictures of refugees streaming south, but are playing their coverage so that such pictures work to the propaganda detriment of the GVN. What you actually have, however, is a rather graphic case of "foot voting" indicating most convincingly that the bulk of northern Quang Tri's population look on the NVA troops as hostile invaders rather than welcome liberators. This is a theme the U.S. Government would be well advised to stress and play for all it is worth. If there is another appropriate lull in White House conversation, you might want to plant this seed in Kissinger's ear.

George A. Carver, Jr.

Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

Attachment

SAIGON 46834 (IN 576340)

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1. IN DISCUSSING REFUGEE SITUATION QUANG TRI PROVINCE WITH GENERAL ABRAMS 3 APRIL, HE MADE POINT THAT REFUGEE MOVEMENT WHICH OFTEN PRESENTED IN PRESS AS NEGATIVE TO GVN'S IMAGE IS, IN FACT, DRAMATIC VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN FAVOR OF GVN.

2. BURDEN OF ABRAM'S ARGUMENT THAT HOSTILE PROPAGANDA ECHOED BY MANY FREE WORLD HAS PORTRAYED GVN AS OPPRESSIVE REGIME, THIEU GOVERNMENT AS DICTATORSHIP IMPOSED BY FRAUD, A TOPSY-TURVY ECONOMIC SYSTEM WHICH BRINGS POVERTY AND HARDSHIP TO THE MASSES WHILE PROTECTING THE INTERESTS OF THE FEW AND AMERICAN ASSISTANCE TO THE GVN AS A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN STATUS QUO BY ABORTING THE APPEAL OF COMMUNISM AS THE ONLY REAL HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE IN THE MINDS OF DEPRIVED PEOPLE. ALL THESE ARGUMENTS FAMILIAR AND COULD BE EMBELLISHED AT LENGTH.

3. YET WHAT HAPPENS IS THAT AS NORTH VIETNAM ARMY INVADES QUANG TRI PROVINCE, VIRTUALLY ENTIRE POPULATION OF AREAS AFFECTED IS MOVING SOUTH WITH WHAT THEY CAN CARRY BUT

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LEAVING BEHIND HOMES AND POSSESSIONS. THEY ALL SEEM TO PREFER "TYRANT" THIEU'S REGIME INSTEAD OF WELCOMING LIBERATING NORTH VIETNAM ARMIES. IT IS INDEED REMARKABLE THAT THESE DOWN-TRODDEN PEOPLE DO NOT PREFER TO LIVE IN PEACE AND PROSPERITY UNDER PROTECTION OF NORTH VIETNAM TANKS AND ARTILLERY BUT ARE REGROUPING AT GREAT PERSONAL SACRIFICE IN TERRITORY WHICH PROTECTED BY ARVN.

4. UNLESS ONE ACCEPTS FANTASY THAT THE CORRUPT PROVINCE AND DISTRICT CHIEFS HAVE HYPNOTIC POWERS OF PERSUASION, ONE CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT WE SEE IN QUANG TRI PROVINCE THESE DAYS ANOTHER REMARKABLE EXAMPLE OF "VOTING WITH THEIR FEET" AS WE HAVE SEEN IN HUNGARY IN 56 AND IN EAST GERMANY.

5. WE INTEND TO PUSH THIS LINE LOCALLY BOTH IN U.S. AND VIETNAM MEDIA. SEE ALSO SAIGON EMBASSY 4508 DATED 3 APRIL. GP-1. (82559)

S E C R E T

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